In 1997, it was decided to reactivate it for practising weapon firing by both helicopters and fighter aircraft.

Since the range was not in use for last many years, a large number of wild growth of kikker bushes and small trees had grown over this area and there were a number of unauthorised encroachments. With the help of civil courts and district authorities the area was cleared of encroachments in 1997. To make it fit for practising weapon firing it was cleared of wild vegetation.

US Navy ships in Indian Shipyards

287. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that the United States is sending US Navy ships to the Indian ship-breaking years posing serious health hazards;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that such an activity is not only violating Indian laws but also the Supreme Court order which bans import of hazardous waste; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take against the importers and the US decision to send its toxic ships to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) As per United States national regulation, an exporter exporting ships for scrapping is required to remove components containing toxic substances from the ship and inform the importing country regarding the possible presence of remaining toxic components so that the importing country can make an informed decision. In 1996, the Government of India received a notification from the US Government for export of two ships namely "NORTHWIND" and "SANTA ISABEL" belonging to US Maritime Administration to India for scrapping. The Government of India communicated to the US Government that based on the recommendation of a study underway to assess the presence of toxic materials in general, its impact on the surrounding environment during the activity of ship-breaking and requirements of environmentally sound disposal of the pollutants generated, the requests for exports will be considered. No further notification has been received from the US Government on export of ships from the United States.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Coastal Zone Management Plan from Maharashtra

288. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:
PROF. RAM KAPSE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received communication bearing No. TPB-4397/1118/UD-11 dated 25th September, 1997 from Government of Maharashtra seeking some information for revising Coastal Zone Management Plan;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on the communication;

(c) if the requisite information has not been supplied to Government of Maharashtra, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when the information will be supplied?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The information sought by the Maharashtra Government was sent to them vide MOEF letter No. J-17011/8/95-IA-III dated March 27, 1998.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Huge Public Investment in Teak Plantations

289. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a six-member expert committee headed by Shri P.B. Gangopadhyay has come to the conclusion that the companies starting teak plantations all over the country, on investments made by the public will not be able